

The Time Machine: Good News for Bad Girls

I originally wrote this for juvenile girls, who pay a much bigger and earlier price for the irresponsible “use” of their delicate bodies. Guys can survive until they’re old men, with babies’ mamas scattered everywhere trying to raise their kids and grandkids while the dads are still going strong, and laughing about their wild oats. That’s why I haven’t gotten around yet to writing a matching article for the boys, unless they can relate to the ones in this book.

But I trust this article will be a wake-up call to the men who participate in the breakdown of families and the mothers and children left without responsible husbands and dads. And some of you were those children whose “needs” have driven you to repeat the cycle. So you probably understand the pain – if you’ll take time to *feel it!*

After reading this, if you have a daughter or know of someone else who might find help through this article, it’s available on my website: www.heartsup.org. If she (or he) is in jail or prison, please have someone on the outside mail her a printed copy.

And now to the “bad girls” about to read this:

What you are about to read may offend you, anger you, discourage you, or depress you. But please read it all, for this is a message of hope and redemption, no matter where and in what stage your life is in now – even if you’re too old and it’s totally impossible for “a time machine” to give you a new beginning. For God actually specializes in restoring lost years and ruined lives, as you’ll see toward the end of this article.

Too late, and now look!

Here you are, no longer a young, sexy teenager with a list of cool dudes wanting to crawl in bed with you. And you can’t believe you actually wanted to get pregnant, more than once!

Those cute little tykes gave you somebody to love and live for. Plus they guaranteed you some kind of income – from the state or your boyfriend, as long as he stayed out of jail. You hoped.

What do you have now to show for what you thought was love and fun back then? You're only thirty-six, but you look fifty and feel older. A lot older.

Where are your old boyfriends now, and your babies' daddies? One's in prison, another is cheating on his nine or tenth live-in girlfriend, like he did with you. And one actually became a Christian, married his woman, and goes to church with their kids.

He tried to talk you into giving your life to Jesus, but you weren't ready yet. You've been saying that for years, but your heart is getting harder all the time.

Back then it was because you were having too much fun. Now it's because you feel you're too far gone; it's too late to change. And that nagging sense of guilt has hardened into a ball and chain around your neck making you meaner and harder to get along with than ever.

As a young teen you tried drugs and smoked cigarettes and pot because it was cool and you wanted to "fit in." Now you're addicted to prescription drugs to keep from going crazy. And you tried to quit smoking a thousand times and finally gave up, even though it's ruining your health and drains what little you get from welfare, especially since one pack now costs four times the cost of a gallon of milk, which you couldn't afford without food stamps.

Then you found out smoking destroys brain circuits and lowers your IQ. No wonder you're losing your mind! No wonder you can't do anything right anymore, like handling your bratty kids.

They fight with you just like you fought with your mom. You feel guilty when you don't bail them out of jail because you don't have the money or don't think they need to be out; but then you hate yourself and can't stand them when you do get them out.

And most of the time they don't even thank you, because they think you owe it to them for making them that way!

You tried too many times to warn them about doing what you did, but they laugh and ask why *you're* still doing such stupid stuff.

Like hanging out with one dead-beat after another, because you still can't live without feeling somebody loves or needs you – even though you know they need you only for sex and a place to stay!

Driven by shame and low self-esteem, you'll take anybody you can get, and just hope he'll help out with the bills. But that rarely happens, because half the time he's smoking weed or is on drugs or alcohol and always has his "reasons" why he can't afford to help. And you wonder if one of his "reasons" is another girlfriend he's *using*. Because you *know* him too well!

The few who do have a little income have to send child-support to someone else who's better off than you are. *If only I'd gotten pregnant by the one who's a Christian now, you think. He's got a good job and probably pays his bills on time, including honest child support! How'd I get so unlucky?*

Once you dreamed of living in your own home with a happy family. Now it's ridiculous to dream anymore. You'd heard that teens who get pregnant end up living in poverty, but you knew some who made out okay and thought you'd be like them.

But too many things went wrong. Now you're living in government housing. Drugs are everywhere. Somebody got shot dead a few doors away just a week ago. You alternate between fear for your life and wishing you'd get shot too. Hell couldn't be any worse.

At least you don't have to pay for your medication, but it barely keeps your STD's under control. And you live in fear of another cancer, like the one that cost you a hysterectomy.

You've got a lump in your breast but keep putting off telling the doctor either because you don't care anymore, or because you dread losing what still might attract those losers who only want that one thing.

You lived for the day you could finally be real friends with your mom, but when you couldn't pay her back for that loan for your son's lawyer, she hasn't spoken to you since. And he's back in jail on another charge, and now *you* won't speak to *him* even though he's all mushy and gushy about asking you to forgive him. As if you haven't heard that line before.

And you watch helplessly while your girls do exactly the same stuff you did and take your warnings as nagging and screaming, accusing you of driving them out of the house and blaming you when they get into trouble! Unless they're sweet-talking you to get them out of it.

The state "programs" they've been to give you a little relief for a few months, but when they're back home, they act even more arrogant. They're getting out of control, but what can you say when you act the same way toward them?

And now the oldest is bringing her drug-addict boyfriend home with her, expecting you to feed him and let him stay! And you think he might have AIDS or hepatitis, but it might be the drugs. Which means she must be into drugs too, and no-telling what else!

No wonder things have been disappearing around the house lately and you never seem to have the money you thought you had, what little it is.

When it can't get any worse, it does! Your baby girl is pregnant and thinks you don't know, but she can't fool you through all her lies. There's a lot of other stuff you're pretty sure

is going on, but if you accuse her she'll explode, then *you'll* blow up and have her back in juvy. And more guilt.

Because you know you did the same with your mom again and again. Now you're reaping the wild oats you sowed, just like they read out of the Bible during the few Bible studies you attended in jail (Galatians 6:7-8).

How you'd give *anything* to go back to when you were young and free, this time to think like a responsible adult and make mature decisions instead of acting like the reckless, dumb teenager you were!

God, is there any hope? you ask. *Is this the way my life is going to end, only to yet end up in hell when I die?*

What would you do differently?

I'll let you think awhile: do some deep, heart-searching about the "what ifs" – what you would do differently if you had a second chance, which God longs to give you if you'll take it!

What if I had a mom and dad like some of the other kids had, parents who showed respect and love to their kids?

But no, I can't go there. First, because that's an excuse, failure to take the blame myself. And second, some of the friends who got me into trouble were from good families with a mom and dad.

So maybe it was the friends I hung with. I knew the clean-cut smart kids kept their distance from me. And no wonder, with my gutter language: F-this and M-F-that. Filthy, sexual language. I just fell in with my kind – the sewage plant of the city.

If I'd known it would mold my character into such a low-life, would I or could I have done anything about it?

Of course I would have, but how could I have ever predicted such a horrible outcome? Yet if I could have seen a clear picture, a 3-D video of what I'm going through now . . . yes, I would have done absolutely anything to change direction.

Like what? What could I have done about my bad friends? Where could I have gone to find friends who'd be good role-models for me? Mom never went to church and certainly never expected me to go.

It would have been almost impossible to suddenly leave my old friends and start going to church to find better friends. Besides, they wouldn't have accepted me.

Yet, wow, if simply choosing better friends could have changed my entire future, then, yes. I would have done whatever it took to find some church and someone in that church who would accept me and help me change.

I would have asked the pastor or youth leader or some caring woman for help. I wouldn't give up until I found some-body to

be my friend who could influence me the right way and keep after me.

But there I go again, putting the responsibility on someone else. Yes, I'd have to be the one to keep after myself and never give up. That is, if I could have known how much it would change my future and save me from this hell.

Then there's another thing I would do differently. I'd change my attitude toward sex. Now I don't get pleasure out of it any more. I feel used because I am used – a worn out, bacteria and virus-infested body for lust-driven men to find release on. Of course they deserve the sex diseases I have. I got 'em from them in the first place.

How could anything that once seemed so beautiful and loving end up so disgusting and repulsive?

But could anything have stopped me from something all my friends were doing? Could I have stood my ground against the social pressure? Could I have said no to my boyfriends, knowing they'd simply go to another prettier girl and get what they wanted?

Never in a million years. Unless, that is, I could have seen clearly what it would lead to – a wasted body, ruined emotions, no ability to feel the deep joys of intimacy, a heart and mind filled with the torture of resentment, bitterness, hatred, anger, and depression. And broken relationships damaged beyond repair. Emptiness. O God, such lonely emptiness!

Yes, if I had a second chance, I would absolutely stand my ground, look my friends in the eye, and almost shout, No way! Go ruin somebody else's life, not mine!

Or better yet, because I know I still might cave in, remove myself entirely from their influence. At any rate, I would make sexual abstinence a huge priority, top of the list. I would carefully save my precious young feminine body for one man who would marry me and stick with me for life.

Wow! To think there are marriages still like that. Do they realize what they have? It has to be worth more than anything in the world – more than winning the lottery a thousand times over.

Yes . . . no doubt! That's what I would do if I had another chance. But there's no way that could ever happen. I forget, I'm old and beat down to a worthless rag loved by absolutely nobody – not my mother (why can't she forgive me?) or my kids (may they get what they deserve!).

But there's something else I would change that would make a major, major difference, I think. I would change the kind of music and rap I listened to. I thought it was so cool back then. It

fed my lust for evil and pagan, and justified my rebellion against the police and the government and my mom and tradition.

I thought it didn't affect me at the time, but over enough time I turned into what I listened to – a hateful, evil, bitter person with a rotten attitude toward everybody good.

The very people I needed, the people who could have led me right, school teachers, church folks, even the correction I needed from law enforcement officers, I hated, until that hatred drove me away from good people right into the arms of Satan himself.

But that was not all. I fed on movies and TV programs the Christians called trash – murder, rape, horror, sex, and laced throughout with the filthy language I now speak without giving it a second thought.

When I wasn't bathing my brain in sewage, I was on my phone, contaminating my friends with my filthy mouth and feeding on their garbage and more from the Web.

No, it's not surprising I am where I'm at now. I lived – ate, slept, drank – a lifestyle more like hell than heaven. What did I expect? Duh!

But of course I dared anybody to stop me. I laughed at jail volunteers or Christian COs who quoted verses about loving not the world and renewing our mind with the Bible and Christian music.

O God . . . what I would give now to have the kind of peace and happiness I remember them having. I never dreamed my lifestyle would have betrayed me like this. I thought it was so cool back then; it made me feel important, sometimes invincible, like nothing could touch me!

Yes, if changing what I fed into my mind could have changed my attitude and outlook on life and toward others, I would have done it in a heartbeat – whatever it cost, whatever the trouble. I'd pursue a clean lifestyle with every atom of my being – if only I could have known. If only!

The rest of it – alcohol, drugs, partying all night, sex-orgies, smoking pot with my friends because we couldn't stand anybody telling us it was a “drug” and not a God-created plant for “medicine” and a mind-enhancer – it makes me sick to think I was so deceived, so lied to.

Half or more of those friends are dead now, some from drugs, some from criminal activity that backfired, literally, and some from bodies ruined by misuse and abuse – cancer, heart failure, disease.

And heartbreak. Yes, friends I'm sure who died of a broken heart – rejected by their mates, parents, children, and most of their friends.

I used to cry myself to sleep. Now I have no tears left. So pills put me to sleep, and pills help me get up and cope and deaden some of the pain. Some of it. Not all. Not all by a long shot. A second chance? I wish. But it's no use wishing. It's too late.

The time machine

No it's not too late. In *real time* you're a teenager – young, still fairly healthy, and still capable of finding true happiness. You've made some bad choices, but it's not too late to make the good choices you wished you would have made. But you left out the main ingredient in your wish list: God's Son, Jesus Christ.

You probably couldn't change if you tried, and God knows you can't without His help. Because what He did for you through Jesus is enough to not only change your life from inside out, but fill you with joy in circumstances that would normally be depressing and hopeless (Romans 15:13; Galatians 5:20; 1 Peter 1:8; 1 John 1:4).

Of course you saw this when you compared your life with happy people. But many are happy because they live in a happy family surrounded by love. But God wants to fill you with joy right where you are so you can become a channel of His joy for others around you.

Because then your happiness is not dependent on getting what you want or being who you wish you were, but simply on knowing Jesus, who has your whole life planned out and invites you to begin to *enjoy* it (Psalm 139; Luke 12:22–32).

His love and power reach out to those who truly want to change, who are *broken* by sin and rebellion, who come to the end of themselves. Jesus told about the “prodigal son” who blew his inheritance on booze and women and ended up deserted, homeless, penniless, and starving. But it took this before he could appreciate what he'd walked away from for what he thought would be fun and pleasure (Luke 15:11–32).

God can use your failures and hopeless circumstances when they bring you to the end and you finally realize what *truth* is and what you really need, for “*the truth shall make you free*” (Jn 89:35).

And He has already prepared a “banquet” of joy and fellowship just waiting for you, like that bad son's father did for him. God sent Jesus, not just to die for you, but to go through the trials of real humanity and suffer abuse and rejection more than any human being, all for one purpose: to truly understand what you are going through so He can effectively convince His Father to give you mercy and turn your life around (Luke 14:16–24; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 2:5–8; Hebrews 2:14–18; 5:1–9).

He died as a criminal, as the worst sinner who ever lived, even though He'd never sinned. The sins He was punished for were *your* sins and mine. We've all sinned in some way, even good people (Romans 3:23; 4:25; Galatians 3:13; 1 Peter 2:24).

Sin is like driving the wrong way on a busy highway. Sin is breaking spiritual laws, which is more deadly than breaking physical laws, because you may end up in hell, not just dead (Proverbs 1:24–33; Galatians 5:16–23).

When you ask God to forgive you for going the wrong way (sin), you invite Him in and give him the driver's seat of your life. He'll not only steer you back in the right direction, He'll fill the deep emptiness that made you *want* to sin (Romans 8:1–4; Psalm 40:8; Jeremiah 31:33; Hebrews 8:10; 10:16).

The joy and pleasure you get from knowing Him makes doing the right things more fun than doing bad things. You find it's more fun to love and be kind to your worst enemies than it is to resent or hate them or try to get even with them. Because the Holy Spirit helps you *understand* them (Matthew 5:44–45; Romans 6:22; Galatians 5:22; Psalm 40:8).

Even giving up a sinful pleasure like unmarried sex can fill you with joy when you know your body belongs to God, who will take better care of it than you can, and give you better and deeper pleasure than sex. Or make married sex what it's supposed to be – the uniting of husband and wife into *one* intimate union, where the pleasure goes deeper than physical and emotional (Proverbs 5:18–19; Matthew 19:3–6; Ephesians 5:31–32).

This is how people change from being extremely wicked to awesome men and women of God with glowing, powerful testimonies. They find God's love to be far more powerful and pleasurable than anything sin offered (John 3:16; Romans 11:30–36; 1 Corinthians 2:9; 1 John 4:10).

So now you have a choice: there's a very slim chance, maybe a thousand to one, that if you continue in a sinful lifestyle you will turn to God before it's too late. But even if the odds are in your favor, you still have the rest of your life to live out the results of abusing your family, your body, your relationships, your employment history, and the record that comes up on a background check when you need a job or a place to live.

But reaping what we sowed is part of the healing and restoring process. Suffering humbles and changes us. But the sooner we repent and come to God, the more pain we save ourselves in the recovery years. Just look at what King David suffered for his sin, long after he repented and God forgave him (2 Samuel 11–19; Psalm 32, 38, 51).

Of course God gives you this joy even in your suffering, and many will come to Him only through this long, painful path.

My wife's mother is an invalid and watches Christian TV all day in our living room. When I pass through I hear anything from preaching to *The Lone Ranger* (a 1950s cowboy TV series).

But what stops me in my tracks is when I hear the testimony of a woman radiating love and beauty, who once was a prostitute and drug-addict, driven to the streets by bitterness and anger from sexual or physical abuse by a relative or mate. A wasted street tramp.

When it seemed all hope was lost, bodies ruined, brains fried, given up by professionals, and abandoned by family and friends, they fell in brokenness at the feet of Jesus and He began to restore them.

It's almost impossible to believe some of their stories when I see who they are now and how God is using them to minister to others. For they more deeply understand their pain than those who never fell (2 Corinthians 1:4).¹

I remember one addicted mother who began dealing drugs to support her habit, then ended up in prison as an accomplice to a murder. But there she gave her life to Jesus, went on to write a book, and now has an active counseling ministry in prison. You'd think she served in the White House by the look of joy and peace on her face, even though she's deprived of her children.

Two of the most popular speakers in the world, Joyce Meyer and Beth Moore, are products of sexual abuse (Joyce) and drug addiction (Beth). They speak to the *heart* of the hurting and God is using them to restore probably millions.

And He will redeem *your* life from destruction and re-set your life on a collision course with the creative energy of the universe – Christ in *you*, the hope of *glory!* He will make you *more than a conqueror* through *Him who loves you* because of His power working in you. So don't *give up* because you've *messed up* (Romans 5:20; 6:1; Ephesians 1:6–8; 2:1–5; Colossians 1:27; 1 Timothy 1:13–16; James 1:2–4; 5:11).

Whatever you've done so far, it's not too late for your "second chance," made possible by this journey into your future: come to Jesus now while it's still easy, and let Him *make-over* your life (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Don't wait and buy a few short years of fun on credit, then begin making daily installments – pay back – for the rest of your life, and wish "for God's sake" you'd only listened, back when you were young.

Read this verse carefully: "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also *freely give us all things?*" (Romans 8:32).

He really will. It's happened to millions; it can – it will! – happen to you.

1. Get the book, *Forever Changed: A Story of God's Transforming Power* – the “true story about how Teresa Kemp’s life was destroyed by sexual abuse, drugs, alcohol, and incarceration. Hers was a life broken into pieces, a life without hope. But on July 20th, 1997, at 9:30 in the morning, Teresa had an encounter with Jesus Christ and was touched by the transforming power of God. She would never be the same again because after that day her life would be forever changed.” (Available at www.breakingchainsint.org)